

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A distributed entertainment system comprising:

at least one entertainment unit ~~couplable to a wide area network (WAN), the WAN being couplable to a central resource having a central content storage module that stores entertainment content, and including a master list of entertainment content items available through the WAN, the at least one entertainment unit~~ comprising:

a network interface for coupling with a central resource via a wide area network (WAN), said central resource having a central content storage module that stores entertainment content;

a user interface, comprising at least one graphical user interface (GUI);

a local memory ~~device~~ that stores entertainment content, a master list of all entertainment content items available from the central resource, and a local list of the entertainment content stored on the local memory; and

~~a local list of the entertainment content stored on the local memory device;~~
a user input device; ~~and~~

wherein a user, through the user input device and the user interface, may view the master list and the local list of entertainment content items, and request an item from the master list or the local list, wherein if the requested item is not on the local list, the requested item is transferred to at least one of the at least one entertainment units and performed locally in response to the user request.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, wherein the at least one entertainment unit comprises multiple entertainment units are coupled to each other via a local area network (LAN).

Claim 3 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 2, wherein each of the multiple entertainment units is coupled to the WAN.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, further comprising an infrared (IR) receiver/transmitter for transferring data and commands from the at least one entertainment unit and for receiving data and commands in the at least one entertainment unit.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, further comprising at least one payment device comprising a coin acceptor, a bill acceptor, or a credit card/smart card reader.

Claim 6 (original): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, wherein the at least one entertainment unit further comprises an audio unit comprising audio speakers and hardware and software for playing music.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, further comprising a central management resource ~~couplable~~ coupled to the at least one entertainment unit via the WAN, the central management resource comprising:

- a management module that performs administrative functions;
- a monitoring module that monitors system components and collects and stores data related to system usage; and
- a content delivery module that controls delivery of entertainment content from the central content storage module to the at least one entertainment unit.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 7, wherein the central management resource further comprises:

- master content management logic that manages entertainment content in the at least one entertainment unit;
- a master activity log that stores data regarding activity of the at least one entertainment unit; and
- a master attract loop database that stores attract loops available to the at least one entertainment unit, wherein each of the attract loops comprise electronic data

that may be displayed to show advertisements and activities that are available on the at least one entertainment unit.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 8, further comprising a content processing module comprising:

recorded media comprising music data recorded in an electronic format on a medium; digital encoding hardware and software coupled to the recorded media that receives the music data, and digitally encodes the music to produce digitally encoded music data;

an intermediate storage device coupled to the digital encoding hardware that receives and stores the digitally encoded music data; and

compression hardware and software coupled to the intermediate storage device, wherein the compression hardware and software receives the digitally encoded music data, and compresses the digitally encoded music data.

Claim 10 (original): The distributed entertainment system of claim 9, wherein the music data includes music identifying information, music files, and album art.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A network entertainment unit, comprising:

a user interface, comprising at least one graphical user interface (GUI) displaying a ~~list of~~ entertainment content items ~~stored remotely available for performance;~~
a local memory ~~device~~ that stores entertainment content and a master list of all entertainment content items available from a remote central resource;
a user input device; and
content management logic to control the entertainment unit such that in response to receiving a request via the user input device for performance of an entertainment content item ~~from the list of entertainment content items~~ not stored in the local memory ~~device~~, retrieving the requested item via a WAN and performing the requested item locally in response to the request.

Claim 12 (original): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, further comprising an infrared (IR) receiver/transmitter for transferring data and commands from the entertainment unit and for receiving data and commands in the entertainment unit.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, further comprising at least one payment device selected from a coin acceptor; a bill acceptor; and a credit card/smart card reader.

Claim 14 (original): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, further comprising an audio unit comprising audio speakers and hardware and software for playing music.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, wherein the at least one GUI comprises:

a music selection GUI through which the user may choose music from the list of entertainment content items stored remotely to be played locally; and
a game selection GUI through which the user may choose games from the list of entertainment content items stored remotely to be played locally.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A method for electronic entertainment, comprising:
at an entertainment unit in a venue, the entertainment unit comprising a network interface for coupling to a WAN, ~~receiving a request for an item of entertainment content from a user, wherein the request includes a selection from a list of entertainment content, the list including a master list of entertainment content stored in at least one location on a network~~ said entertainment unit storing a master list of all entertainment content available from a central management resource remote from the venue and a list of local content stored on a memory device on the entertainment unit, ~~the local content grouped according to a common characteristic, receiving a request for an item of entertainment content from a user, wherein the request includes a selection from the master list of all entertainment content,~~ but where the selection requests entertainment content not stored on the entertainment unit;
transmitting the request via the WAN to a the central management resource ~~remote from the venue~~;
supplying the requested entertainment content item to the entertainment unit from a memory ~~device~~ on the central management resource, wherein the entertainment content item comprises music or an electronic game;
receiving the requested entertainment content item at the entertainment unit in the venue; and
presenting the entertainment content item to the user upon successful delivery to the entertainment unit.

Claim 17 (original): The method of claim 16, further comprising:
at the entertainment unit in the venue, receiving an input indicating an identity of the user;
accessing a user account with the identity of the user; and
charging the user account for supplied entertainment content.

Claim 18 (original): The method of claim 17, further comprising:
receiving a request to purchase products available at the venue; and

charging the user account for any requested products that are supplied to the user.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The method of claim 16, further comprising:

at the entertainment unit, querying the user whether the user wishes to establish an identity;

receiving an input from the user indicating the identity of the user;

converting the input to a user identity;

receiving charge account information from the user; and

associating the user identity with the charge account information, wherein the input is selected from an alphanumeric identification, a thumbprint, and a facial image.

Claim 20 (original): The method of claim 16, further comprising receiving a request from the user to browse the World Wide Web (web) and in response, giving the user access to the web at the entertainment unit.

Claim 21 (original): The method of claim 16, further comprising maintaining an activity log that stores a record of activity on the entertainment unit, wherein the activity comprises requests and purchases by the user.

Claim 22 (original): The method of claim 16, further comprising:

displaying to the user a list of available music, including graphical images;

receiving an indication from the user that the user wishes to purchase selected music from the list; and

automatically accessing a web site that offers the selected music for sale.

Claim 23 (original): The method of claim 22, further comprising downloading the selected music from the entertainment unit to a mobile user device using a wireless communication method.

Claim 24 (canceled)

Claim 25 (original): The distributed entertainment system of claim 7, wherein the central management resource further comprises:

- a master music information database that stores a master list of music available to the at least one entertainment unit; and
- a master game database that stores information about games available to the at least one entertainment unit, wherein the master list of music and the information about games are included in the master list of entertainment content items available through the WAN.

Claims 26-28 (canceled)

Claim 29 (currently amended): A content distribution system for distributing entertainment on a network, comprising:

- a central resource coupled to the network, the central resource including a central storage unit, wherein the central storage unit stores entertainment content and a master list of entertainment content available on the network;
- at least one electronic entertainment device coupled to the network, the at least one electronic entertainment device including a local storage unit storing the master list of all entertainment content available from the central resource, a local cache, a user input device, and a user interface, wherein the user interface displays to a user a local list of entertainment content stored on the entertainment device and the master list of entertainment content available on the network, and wherein in response to a selection of an entertainment content item received by the user input device, the at least one electronic entertainment device determines whether the selected entertainment content item is stored in the local storage unit;
- if the selected entertainment content is stored in the local storage unit of the electronic entertainment device, the selected entertainment content is performed on the electronic entertainment device from the local storage unit; and
- if the selected entertainment content is not stored in the local storage unit, the selected entertainment content is requested from the central resource over the network, transferred to the electronic entertainment device, and performed in response to the user request on the electronic entertainment device after being received.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The content distribution system of claim 29, wherein the entertainment content stored in the local storage unit is grouped by a common characteristic.

Claim 31 (canceled)

Claim 32 (previously presented): The content distribution system of claim 29, wherein the network comprises at least one local area network (LAN).

Claim 33 (previously presented): The content distribution system of claim 29, wherein the central resource further comprises master content management logic that manages distribution of entertainment content over the network, wherein said distribution comprises:

- initially storing all of the entertainment content on the master list on the central storage unit; and
- in response to a user request from an electronic entertainment unit for entertainment content, transferring the requested entertainment content to the electronic entertainment unit.

Claim 34 (original): The content distribution system of claim 29, wherein the at least one electronic entertainment unit includes an activity log that stores information regarding entertainment content usage and fee payment.

Claim 35 (currently amended): A distributed entertainment system, comprising:

- a central resource coupled to a wide area network (WAN), wherein the central resource includes a central content storage module that stores entertainment content, including a master list of all entertainment content items available from the central resource through the WAN; and
- at least one entertainment unit coupled to the WAN, the at least one entertainment unit comprising:
 - a user interface, comprising at least one graphical user interface (GUI);
 - a local memory ~~device~~ that stores a plurality of entertainment content items; the master list of entertainment content items available from the central resource, and a local list of the entertainment content stored on the local memory ~~device~~;
 - a peripheral interface;
 - a user input device; and
 - content management logic configured to control the entertainment unit such that in response to a request via the user input device to perform an entertainment content item not stored in the local memory ~~device~~:
 - the entertainment unit requests the requested entertainment content item from the central resource;
 - the entertainment unit receives the requested entertainment content item from the central resource; and
 - the entertainment unit performs the requested entertainment content item.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 35, wherein:

- the user interface allows a user to order at least one of food, beverages, or other product or service provided by a venue, to conduct e-commerce transactions, to browse the internet, to view video content, to view movies, to view television content, and to access a games selection GUI.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 35, wherein:

the user interface allows a user to purchase music and download the purchased music to a portable storage and play device.

Claim 38 (currently amended): The distributed entertainment system of claim 35, wherein:

the local list of the entertainment content stored on the local memory device comprises entertainment content items from more than one entertainment unit in the local venue.

Claim 39 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, further comprising the central resource and wherein the central resource is coupled to the WAN.

Claim 40 (cancelled): ~~The distributed entertainment system of claim 39, further comprising the WAN.~~

Claim 41 (currently amended): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, wherein the local memory device stores two or more sets of entertainment content grouped according to a common characteristic.

Claim 42 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 38, further comprising at least one peripheral interface and at least one peripheral device coupled to the at least one entertainment unit via the at least one peripheral interface.

Claim 43 (canceled)

Claim 44 (currently amended): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, further comprising a local cache capable of storing entertainment content requested from the central resource, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is

stored in the local cache and performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the central resource.

Claim 45 (cancelled): ~~The distributed entertainment system of claim 44, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is stored in the local cache and performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the central resource.~~

Claim 46 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is placed in queue to be performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the master list.

Claim 47 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is performed locally in response to the user request immediately upon receipt from the central resource.

Claim 48 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 1, wherein each of the at least one entertainment units is ~~couplable~~ coupled to a local area network (LAN).

Claims 49-50 (canceled)

Claim 51 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 42, wherein at least one peripheral device comprises at least one user identification (ID) device selected from a thumbprint recognition device and a facial recognition device.

Claim 52 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 42, wherein at least one peripheral device comprises a video unit comprising hardware and software for capturing and processing images.

Claim 53 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 7, wherein the central management resource is coupled to the at least one entertainment unit via the WAN.

Claim 54 (previously presented): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, further comprising:

- a local area network (LAN) interface through which the network entertainment unit may communicate with similar network entertainment units in a venue; and
- a WAN interface through which the network entertainment unit may communicate with a central management resource remote from the venue.

Claim 55 (currently amended): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, further comprising a local cache capable of storing the requested entertainment content item, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the master list is stored in the local cache and performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt via the WAN.

~~Claim 56 (cancelled): The network entertainment unit of claim 55, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the master list is stored in the local cache and performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt via the WAN.~~

Claim 57 (previously presented): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, wherein the requested entertainment content item is placed in queue to be performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt.

Claim 58 (previously presented): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, wherein the requested entertainment content item is performed locally in response to the user request immediately upon receipt via the WAN.

Claim 59 (previously presented): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, further comprising at least one user identification (ID) device selected from a thumbprint recognition device and a facial recognition device.

Claim 60 (previously presented): The network entertainment unit of claim 11, further comprising a video unit comprising hardware and software for capturing and processing images.

Claim 61 (currently amended): The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of storing the requested entertainment content item in a local cache, the local cache being distinct from the memory ~~device~~ of the entertainment unit, prior to presenting the entertainment content to the user.

Claim 62 (currently amended): The content distribution system of claim 29, further comprising a local cache capable of storing entertainment content requested from the master list, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the master list is stored in the local cache and performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the master list.

Claim 63 (cancelled): ~~The content distribution system of claim 62, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the master list is stored in the local cache and performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the master list.~~

Claim 64 (previously presented): The content distribution system of claim 29, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is placed in queue to be performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the central resource.

Claim 65 (previously presented): The content distribution system of claim 29, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is performed locally in response to the user request immediately upon receipt from the central resource.

Claim 66 (previously presented): The content distribution system of claim 32, wherein the network further comprises at least one wide area network (WAN).

Claim 67 (previously presented): The content distribution system of claim 33, wherein the distribution further comprises:

determining whether a local storage unit of the electronic entertainment unit is full;
and, if the local storage unit of the electronic entertainment unit is full,
notifying the central resource.

Claim 68 (currently amended): The distributed entertainment system of claim 35, further comprising a local cache capable of storing entertainment content requested from the central resource, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is stored in the local cache and performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the central resource.

~~Claim 69 (cancelled): The distributed entertainment system of claim 68, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is stored in the local cache and performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the central resource.~~

Claim 70 (previously presented) The distributed entertainment system of claim 35, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is placed in queue to be performed locally in response to the user request upon receipt from the central resource.

Claim 71 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 35, wherein the item of entertainment content requested from the central resource is performed locally in response to the user request immediately upon receipt from the central resource.

Claim 72 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 35, wherein the entertainment content on the central content storage module comprises at least one entertainment content item selected from the group consisting of music, games, television content, and art.

Claims 73-86 (canceled)

Claim 87 (previously presented): The distributed entertainment system of claim 8, further comprising a user database that stores information relating to previously established user accounts.

Claim 88 (currently amended): The method of claim 16, wherein the entertainment unit is coupled to a local area network (LAN) connected to different entertainment units in the venue, the method further comprising:

in response receiving the request for entertainment content item, transmitting the request via the LAN to a different entertainment unit in the venue; and supplying the requested entertainment content to the entertainment unit from a memory device on the different entertainment unit.

Claim 89 (currently amended) The distributed entertainment system of claim 35, wherein the plurality of entertainment content items stored on the local memory device comprises two or more sets of entertainment content items grouped according to a common characteristic.

Claim 90 (currently amended): A method of operating an entertainment unit comprising a network interface and a local memory storing a plurality of locally stored entertainment content items and a master list of all entertainment content items available from a central resource, said method comprising:

providing a user interface allowing a user to search ~~a list of~~ for entertainment content items available for performance on the local memory and entertainment content items available from a central resource;

receiving via a user input device a request from the user to perform an entertainment content item not stored on the local memory; and

in response to the request, retrieving the requested entertainment content item from ~~a~~ the central resource via the network interface and performing the requested entertainment content item.

Claim 91 (previously presented): The method of claim 90, further comprising:

immediately upon retrieving the requested entertainment content item from the central resource, placing the requested entertainment content item in queue for local performance.

Claim 92 (previously presented): The method of claim 90, wherein:

the requested entertainment content item comprises an audio file or a video file.

Claim 93 (previously presented): The method of claim 90, further comprising:

prior to receiving the request to perform the entertainment content item, receiving payment from a user.

Claim 94 (previously presented): The method of claim 90, further comprising:

providing the user interface to allow the user to search for entertainment content items by artist, song title, and album title.

Claim 95 (currently amended): An entertainment unit for receiving entertainment content from a central resource having a central content storage module that stores entertainment content items ~~and including a master list of entertainment content items~~, the entertainment unit comprising:

- a network interface;

- a user interface;

- a user input device;

- a memory comprising one or more digital storage devices storing:

- a local list of ~~the~~ a plurality of entertainment content items stored locally in the memory; and

- a master list of all entertainment content items ~~stored on~~ available from the central resource; and

- content management logic for controlling the operation of the entertainment unit such that in response to receiving a request via the user input device for an entertainment content item not on the local list of entertainment content items, the requested entertainment content item is retrieved from the central resource via the network interface and performed locally in response to the request.